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HISTORICAL NOTES.

GENERAL HAMPTON'S PROTEST AGAINST THE TREATMENT OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.—The following is an extract of an unpublished letter of Gen. Wade Hampton to President Johnson, written in 1866:

There is one other wrong so deep, so wanton, so stupendous, that in comparison with it all others seem but petty annoyances. I mean, of course, the treatment to which Mr. Davis has been subjected. No one in the South believes, Mr. President, that it was by your direction, or under your sanction that Mr. Davis has been treated as a condemned felon. For your own sake, for the sake of that government of which you are the head, for humanity's sake, for christianity we hope that you are not even cognizant of the brutal barbarity to which, day by day and hour by hour for the last weary year that heroic captive has been subjected. We exonerate you from this cold blooded, cowardly, this wanton crime, but we lay it at the door of your Secretary of War. We believe him capable of its commission, and the whole South with united and indignant voices holding him up to the scorn and hatred of christendom, exclaims: "Thou art the man." But now that the horrors of that dungeon at Fortress Monroe have been brought to light, horrors which find no parallel save in the annals of the Inquisition—the whole South appeals to you to rectify this frightful crime, to protect our fallen chief from insult and to treat him as becomes your station and his character. Our hearts burned within us as we heard of the slow torture inflicted on him in the hope of disposing of his case and his life together, of the daily insults of his head jailer, of the hard and scanty fare and the felon's shackles. We feel that he is vicariously bearing our sorrows and our sufferings, and every true heart in the South turns to him now with greater devotion and love than when at the head of a powerful people and victorious army he shook to its centre that government which now holds his destinies in its hands. We do not ask mercy for him at your hands, we only demand justice. Upon what principle of law or justice, not to speak of the higher duty of humanity, is Mr. Davis kept in the most rigorous confinement, subjected to the most ignominious treatment, and denied the sacred constitutional right to trial? How can this conduct be reconciled with that provision of the constitution which declares that, "in all criminal prosecution, the accused shall enjoy the right of a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury." Mr. Davis is held as a great State prisoner charged with a violation of the constitution of the United States and yet for more than a year that constitution has been openly and flagrantly violated in his person by those whose highest duty it is to preserve it intact and inviolate. This tardy administration of justice, this refusal to carry out the express provisions of the constitution have given rise to gravest suspicions of foul play and it behooves the government so to act as to set these suspicions at rest forever. When that ill-fated vessel the Florida was seized in a neutral port many and various were the surmises as to the means the authorities would adopt to relieve themselves from the embarrassing dilemma in which they had been placed by the indiscreet zeal of one of their officials; the law of nations, international comity, justice, all demanded of the captors a restoration of the vessel to her

rightful owners. But with the brave Alabama on the high seas how could they consent to give her a consort? Yankee ingenuity, which is seldom fettered by morality, soon found a ready solution of the difficulty. The Florida was accidentally run down! The world will think that this case furnishes the precedent which is to solve all the difficulties and embarrassments surrounding the case of the illustrious captive, who has been punished as a felon without being tried as a freeman. Can you believe Mr. President that the great heart of the Southern people can glow with brotherly love or loyalty when such fearful, such horrible suspicions stir it to its profoundest depths, can we, who are equally guilty with Mr. Davis, if guilt there be, sit by unmoved in safety, and see the chosen and beloved head of our short lived and now extinct nationality outraged and insulted, shackled? Every outrage aimed at him rouses an indignant thrill in our bosoms; every insult though it falls harmlessly on that venerated head, rankles in our hearts and the iron that fettered his limbs entered our souls! This Mr. President is not conciliation or if it be it is not of the sort that converts enemies into friends. You have done much for the South, and as one of her most devoted though humblest sons, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. But if you wish to touch the deepest chord in the Southern heart, strike the shackles from the limbs of Mr. Davis, treat him if he must be treated as a foe as an honorable and vanquished one and grant him a speedy and impartial trial. You cannot have read unmoved the record of his prison life which has just given to the world the fearful secret of that dread prison house. Dwell for a moment on the scene that depicts that feeble prisoner, weak, ill, suffering, bowed to earth by domestic sorrow and grief for a nation's death, a sensitive and refined gentleman, a true and devoted patriot, an humble and sincere christian, seized by ruffians and manacled! Well might he exclaim in his agony—and posterity will reecho the cry forever—"O, the shame, the shame, the shame!"

THE EXPEDITION AGAINST THE BRITISH ON PORT ROYAL ISLAND.—The following letter, written by a survivor of the expedition under General Moultrie, which drove the British from Port Royal Island in 1779, to Colin Campbell, of Beaufort, from Trenton, N. J., in 1831 or 1832, gives some interesting reminiscences of that expedition:

Before you parted from us, I promised to embody in writing the substance of our conversations and of my recollections, of the Rencontre with the British on Beaufort Island, in February 1779. Nearly Fifty three years have since rolled by, and I have neither books nor other data to assist me, but I will now commit to paper such particulars as yet remain impressed on my memory, which has always been very good.

I must premise that I was too young and uninformed, to offer an opinion on the object of the expedition which resulted in this affair; unless it was to check the incursions of the enemy into Carolina for plunder, and especially to prevent slaves from taking refuge within their lines. The British it must be recollected, were then in possession of Savannah, and the lower part of Georgia.

Be this as it may, the expedition was made up of some volunteer companies from Charleston, including a part of the ancient battalion of artillery, with two three-pounder field pieces, joined to the militia

of the neighboring main, and of Beaufort Island; the whole forming a body of four or five hundred men.

These troops were encamped at the ferry, ten miles distant from Beaufort, while several small parties of mounted militia scoured the neighboring Country. After some time, about half of our force crossed to the island and took possession of Beaufort. But a week or more having passed without tidings of the enemy, we prepared to return to the ferry, leaving Beaufort about noon, the weather being fair and moderate. But on this very morning, or the previous evening a British force numbering about two hundred and fifty men, commanded I think, by a Colonel Garden or Gardiner, crossed to the island at some western point, and made their way over the country to the ferry. It was now low water, and neither party could cross. After making a demonstration for a half hour or more, the enemy left the ferry, and proceeded to Beaufort. It was believed at the time, that neither party knew that the other was on the island, until they came in contact at the half way house.

The British were espied issuing from the swamp, while we were descending from the hill, about two or three hundred yards distant. Not expecting an enemy, we, for a moment, took them for our party coming from the ferry, to join us at Beaufort, but we were soon undeceived by the appearance of their red coats. Our two field pieces commanded by the late Major Heyward occupied the road, while the infantry with a few militia horse, formed on either side in rear of each flank. A brisk cannonade now ensued, first with round shot and then with cannister, with a sharp and well directed fire from our infantry, that lasted nearly half an hour. Meanwhile the enemy was not idle, but returned us a number of volleys, though being without artillery, they soon gave way, and retreated through the swamp, leaving two of their officers, Calderwood and Finley, among the slain. Many more were wounded, and a dozen prisoners fell into our hands. It was now late in the afternoon. our troops were much fatigued, we were deficient in cavalry, and the ground was unfavorable for pursuit. For these reasons we did not follow the enemy, but returned to Beaufort, where we arrived in the evening.

Among the few killed on our side, I must not omit to name the lamented Lieutenant Wilkins, who fell mortally wounded, while directing one of the field pieces of which he had the command. He expired about twenty four hours after the action, and was buried in Beaufort churchyard. Of this amiable man, and brave soldier, I must add, that he was generally admitted to be the best marksman in the battalion, when practicing with round shot at a target. His name was afterwards engraven on the piece at which he fell, which continued a sacred memento to the battalion until among others, it came into the hands of the British at the reduction of Charleston in May 1780. But to return to my narrative.

On the following day we were joined by the residue of our force, that had remained at the ferry on the opposite shore. Not yet knowing whether the enemy had left the island, or whether he might not return in greater force, all the points of attack were well guarded and duty became fatiguing, night and day.

During this interval it became a question and it was decided, that the bodies of the two British Officers slain and hastily buried on the field of action, should be taken up and brought to town for interment in the churchyard. It was then given out among some of the companies, that if four or five men would volunteer for this purpose, they should be exonerated for a given time from all other duty. Being young, active of buoyant spirits, and not yet eighteen, while ever

ready to engage in anything of an adventurous nature, I was among the first that offered to go on this command.

Among the party, I recollect the late venerable Mr. John Horlbeck of the Charleston Fusiliers, than whom, there was not a more decided patriot in the State. I knew him well, and served with him on several expeditions, and though somewhat advanced in years, and having a family that needed his attentions at home, he was ever ready at his country's call.

Furnished with a horse, cart and driver, and a hoe and spade we set out at ten in the morning for the battle ground, which was about five miles off. The grave we found scarcely three feet deep, and after removing as much of the earth as we could with our tools, the bodies were discovered lying the one upon the other. A companion and myself, as I well remember, kneeling on opposite sides of the grave, and each taking hold by the wrist, we thus raised the bodies, and laying them on their backs in the cart, and covering them with some green bushes, cut from the swamp, we returned slowly to town. They were in full uniform except hats and shoes which were missing. As a memento of this adventure, I recollect cutting a silver button from each of their coats, bearing if I mistake not, the numbers sixteen and forty eight, designating the regiments to which they belonged. They had been dead about forty-eight hours, and the bodies had become by this time quite offensive, so it must be admitted that our task was not a pleasant one.

About the middle of the afternoon we reached the churchyard, where a grave large enough for both had been prepared. The bell was tolled and the troops were assembled. It is perfectly within my recollection that I ran into the Church and brought out a book of common prayer, from which one of the commanding officers read the funeral service. The grave being then closed, the same officer made an address to the multitude, well calculated to excite that enthusiasm so essential at the time, and which finally contributed so much to affect our national emancipation. One passage of this address, in substance at least, I distinctly recollect;—"Soldiers and fellow citizens: We have now shown our enemies that we have not only the courage to face and beat them in the field, but that we have the humanity to give their dead a decent, and a Christian burial." I have a perfect recollection of this officer's person but not of his name, if indeed I ever knew it; there being present several officers commanding the different corps; among them a Colonel or General Bull, perhaps a Barnwell and others.

Another little incident made a great impression on me at the time. After the action, I noticed a large pine tree that stood about a hundred yards in front of our Artillery. This tree was struck by one of our round shot at about five feet from the ground, and near the centre, and was perforated as completely as an inch board could be by a musket ball. I remember viewing it with attention and was much surprised at so great an effect from so small a charge of powder. Could I ever visit Beaufort once more, I should almost search for this tree, though it must long since have decayed and past away. In the church yard also, I should visit the grave of the officers, Calderwood and Finley. The spot is some twenty yards in front of the steeple, or West end of the Church, and a little to the left.

But to resume:—After some days we returned to the ferry, and learning that the enemy had retreated to Savannah, we marched back to Charleston and the expedition ended.

Thus sir, I have endeavored to comply with your request, and these reminiscences are at the disposal of yourself and friends in Beau-

fort. Although there was nothing in this expedition very chivalric or perilous nothing more than the adventures a young and ardent mind might encounter at such a period, yet, I may humbly claim for myself one merit, that during the whole seven years of our struggle for independence, I was ready to go anywhere, or engage in anything, by which the cause might be advanced. With all the inexperience of youth, I frequently exposed myself unnecessarily, and often had reason to regret my temerity. Nor would I say this much were there not a few yet living in Carolina, who can bear me this testimony.

I am now advanced in years being turned of seventy, but when I look back upon these scenes of my early life, a host of stirring incidents throng upon my memory. Death frequently stared me in the face, by land and by water, while imprisonment, cold, hunger, and nakedness fell to my lot. My loss of sight which is now almost total, and my most shattered constitution, I trace mainly to the fatigues, privations and sufferings, I endured throughout the whole period of the war.

When I add to this the loss of an education and a profession, it will be admitted that my political blessings have cost me personally very dear. But I have four sons and a daughter, who with their descendants, and the millions of my country, will I trust and devoutly pray, be benefitted to the latest posterity. The unpatriotic sentiment of the poet deserves but to be spurned while we read it

"Love your country, wish it well
Not with too intense a care
'Tis enough that when it fell
Thou, the ruin did'st not share."

But sir, if such selfish feelings had then generally prevailed where should we now be? I will tell you, in all probability in the full enjoyment of Colonial dependence;—whereas we have achieved our national emancipation, and have reared a wide spreading and a mighty empire.

John Peter Martin¹

¹NOTE—This MS. I find, is not the original, but a copy in the well-known hand of my late Uncle Mr. Wm. T. Martin, son of the writer. The writer himself, Peter (or John Peter) Martin, son of old Pastor Martin died about 1832 or '3, and he lived for some years before in Trenton, N. J., where this MS. is dated, as he refers to his age as being over 70 (p. 7). He was born about 1760, and was barely of age to enter the Revol'y forces, as he did in Charleston at the first outbreak.